The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4), where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare instances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. Individuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1][see page 319 -- Analyst]